

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

The specification is amended by the present response to correct minor informalities therein. Applicants submit no new matter is added.

The claims are amended to address the objections noted in paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Office Action.

Claims 10-15 and 19-23 are pending in this application. Claims 16-18 are canceled without prejudice and new claims 19-23 are added for examination. Applicants submit no new matter is added. Claims 14 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Claim 18 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101. Claims 15, 16, and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. patent 6,275,374 to Shin et al. (herein "Shin"). Claims 10-13 are allowed. Claim 14 was noted as allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Claim 17 was noted as allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and to include all of the limitations of its base claim and any intervening claims.

Initially, applicants gratefully acknowledge the early indication of the allowance of claims 10-13 and of the allowable subject matter in claims 14 and 17.

Addressing first the rejection of claims 14 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, that rejection is traversed by the present response.

Claim 14 is amended by the present response to now recite --a board-- at noted line 4, to clarify the antecedent basis of that term.

Claim 15 is amended by the present response to now recite --a component mounting surface-- at noted line 3, to clarify the antecedent basis for that term.

The presently submitted amendments to claims 14 and 15 are believed to address the rejections thereto under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

Addressing the rejection of claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. §101, that rejection is obviated by the present response as claim 18 is canceled by the present response without prejudice.

Addressing now the rejection of claims 15, 16, and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Shin, that rejection is traversed by the present response.

Claim 15 is amended by the present response to now incorporate the features from previously pending dependent claims 16 and 17, which subject matter was noted as allowable in the outstanding Office Action. Thereby, applicants submit amended independent claim 15 now recites allowable subject matter as indicated in the Office Action.

The present response also adds new claims 19-23 for examination, of which new claims 19 and 23 are independent claims. Those claims as written are believed to also distinguish over Shin.

New independent claim 19 is directed to a support place position determination method that includes:

a support place position determination step of designating and determining the positions of the support places of the backup device, the support places including at least one flexure preventing support place for preventing the flexure of the board and at least one particular component support place for supporting a particular electronic component for which precise mounting is required;

wherein the support place position determination step includes inputting information for setting each support place of the backup device to either the at least one flexure preventing support place or the at least one particular component support place.

New independent claim 23 is directed to a support place position determination device that includes:

support place position determination means for designating and determining the positions of the support places supported by the backup device, the support places including at least one flexure preventing support place for preventing the flexure of the board and at least one particular component

support place for supporting a particular electronic component for which precise mounting is required;

wherein the support place position determination means includes:

setting means for setting each support place supported by the backup device to either the at least one flexure preventing support place or the at least one particular component support place, and

storage means for storing information about the particular electronic component to be supported at the particular component support place.

The above-noted features recited in new independent claims 19 and 23 are believed to distinguish over Shin.

New independent claims 19 and 23 are directed to a method and device for determining positions of support places for a backup device that supports a board, for example when mounting components on the board. With reference to Figures 7-9 in the present specification as a non-limiting example, support places P1-P6 can be determined, those support places P1-P6 including support places for preventing the flexure of the board, see support places P1-P4, and at least one particular component support place, see support places P5-P6.

That is, according to the features clarified in each of independent claims 19 and 23, support places can be determined that not only prevent a board from flexure, but that can also support a particular electronic component that may be required to be more precisely mounted. In the non-limiting example shown in Figure 9 in the present specification, components Xbb and Xaa may be required to be more precisely mounted on a board, and the claimed invention allows such particular components Xbb, Xaa to be supported at support places P5, P6.

The features recited in new independent claims 19 and 23, and thereby the claims dependent therefrom, are believed to clearly distinguish over Shin.

Shin is designed to prevent an input-key support plate 4 from being excessively bent when an operator of a personal computer manipulates input keys on a keyboard. For that purpose Shin devises a protection structure to protect an electric component large-scale IC 1 placed under the input-key support plate 4, and spacers 3 are arranged around the electric component 1 so that excessive bending of the input-key support plate 4 does not impose a load on the electric component 1.

The outstanding rejection cites Shin to disclose setting support places by spacers 3. In that respect applicants note Shin discloses the use of spacers 3 to reduce a flexure amount of plates 4 and 5. As shown for example in Figure 1 in Shin, the spacers 3 provide support to enhance the rigidities in areas 4a and 5a in plates 4 and 5.¹

Such disclosures in Shin are not related to the claimed features.

First, Shin does not disclose or suggest determining support places provided by a backup device.

Further, Shin does not disclose or suggest that the noted support places of spacers 3 include “at least one particular component support place for supporting a particular electronic component for which precise mounting is required”. As noted above, in claims 19-23 a support place for a specific component can be provided. Shin does not disclose or suggest such features. The spacers 3 noted in Shin are not disclosed or suggested as providing support for a particular electronic component such as at support places P5, P6 shown for example in Figure 9 in the present specification.

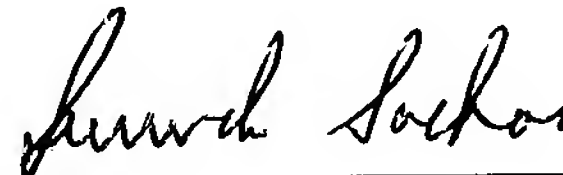
In such ways, each of new independent claims 19 and 23 as currently written, and thereby the claims dependent therefrom, are believed to patentably distinguish over Shin.

¹ Shin at column 4, lines 1-5.

As no other issues are pending in this application, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and it is hereby respectfully requested that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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